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THE SCOPE OF SOCIOLOGY.

III. THE PROBLEMS OF SOCIOLOGY.

CERTAIN readers who might write with authority on this subject will conclude that much in the present chapter is without justification. Beginners will doubtless decide that more of it is without meaning. The attempt will be made to deserve a reversal of both judgments before the series closes. It seems necessary, however, to present some general introductory propositions that are necessarily vague. They must be repeated and amplified in subsequent chapters as the argument proceeds. Even in the present chapter the device of slightly varied repetition will be liberally used.

Chapters i and ii have made our first theorem as superfluous as it is trite, viz.: *Sociology is not concerned with an isolated segment of subject-matter; it is concerned with the same subject-matter that furnishes material for all the other sciences which study men in aggregates, rather than as mere individuals.*¹ A cardinal desideratum of social science is that the apparent gap between the separate parts of study shall be closed, and that in the last constructions of all the social scientists the divisions of labor shall be integrated into one labor. It is not at all necessary to the dignity of that part of social science to which the name "sociology" will be specifically applied in these papers, that it be represented as anything more than a connecting link between other forms of knowledge about society. What it is more than that will appear soon enough, if the simpler notion is once entertained. On the other hand, it is not to be understood that sociology is merely a mechanical device to join living sciences together. It is a living member in a body of science. It is not a mere set of

¹ Schaeffle states that he is merely expanding the thought which he tried to express in his first edition (1875), when he describes general sociology as "eine Philosophie der besonderen Socialwissenschaften, soweit solche beim heutigen Stande der einzelnen gesellschaftswissenschaftlichen Disciplinen überhaupt schon versucht werden kann." (*Bau und Leben*, 2d ed., Vol. I, p. 1.)

points to which the active and fruitful sciences may attach themselves. The claim to be emphasized is that sociology is the combining, organizing, correlating, integrating stage in the process of knowing human society. It is primarily formal. It is only secondarily material. Through the processes of sociology knowledge of society first begins to approach objective reality. It is previously disintegrated and consequently fictitious substitutes for reality. At the same time the fragments of reality are brought to sociology by sciences or experiences that deal with those fragments, as sociology does not, at first hand.

It is often said that the sociologists are not even agreed among themselves as to the subjects with which sociology has to deal. There is more truth in the statement than were to be wished, yet it is not so close to the truth as would be inferred by the uninformed. The more exact truth is that the sociologists are each reasonably sure of what they are driving at, but the unknown elements are so numerous that sociologists are working on many distinct problems. They are more or less inclined to reserve the name "sociology" for the particular problem or type of problems upon which they are individually engaged; and they are disposed to bestow other names upon the problems that occupy their neighbors. There is thus among the sociologists themselves a yielding to the temptation to ignore the whole for the part, and there is difference of opinion about proper names for the parts. In the large, however, the differences among the sociologists really concern this comparatively trifling matter of names much more than the real quest of their researches. To be sure, there are no universally accepted formulas of the sphere of sociology, but there is a considerable parallelism of tendency among the workers who call themselves sociologists. Whatever be the sociologist's definition of his science, or his proposed method, he is likely to be bent upon reaching an account of the social whole *as a whole*, instead of resting with an account of an abstracted part of the whole.¹ It has been true until sociology began to develop its program that all sciences short of cosmic philosophy, whether we have

¹ Cf. above, pp. 506, 507.

called them abstract or concrete, have actually been sciences of abstracted portions even of that whole to which they immediately belonged. There is an evident movement among students of society toward a view that will include these parts in a containing whole. In spite of their disagreements with each other, the sociologists have been most directly and consciously devoted to this enlargement and integration of knowledge.

Without surrendering the preference expressed above,¹ the discussion from this point will employ the term "sociology" in a specific rather than in the proposed general sense.² This specific use does not claim the sanction of all sociologists. It is merely the writer's variation of the usage current among those sociologists with whom he is most closely affiliated. The term "sociology" will accordingly from this point connote merely those parts of social science referred to in our formula at the beginning of the first chapter,³ viz., those phases of societary theory that are concerned with the common facts of human association and with composing them into the most general forms and formulas.

The peculiar problem of sociology may be indicated at first in a very commonplace way. Every man, whether John Smith or the German Kaiser, has to have a tacit conception of life, by which to place himself with reference to the rest of the world. What every man has to assume as a matter of practice sociology aims to work out systematically as a matter of theory. What is our life? What facts compose it? What facts influence it? What forms does it take? What limitations does it betray? What tendencies does it exhibit? What ultimate or distant prospects does it suggest for attainment? What is the connection of each individual life with this total and complicated process?

This partial indication of the problem implies that sociology has to deal with facts which had long been under investigation

¹ Pp. 642, 643.

² Since the world will probably not adopt out of hand the usage that the writer would prefer, he must content himself under protest with this provisional *synecdoche*.

³ P. 506.

in one way or another before the term "sociology" was invented. Indeed, we may approach a little nearer to exact definition by saying that the business of the sociologist is to organize available knowledge of the conditions of human life, so that all concrete questions of conduct will be more easily, or at least more truly, answered when placed in the setting that this organized knowledge furnishes. The sociologist has the duty, first of all, to lay a reliable foundation for reflective conduct in analysis and in synthetic interpretation of general social relations, as given in all available knowledge of past and present associations.

To illustrate: The historian may describe a given period or episode of human experience, say the Gracchan revolutions in Rome or "the Revolution" in France. It is a piece of very highly specialized work to find out the facts and their correlations in a particular instance. Quite likely the man who studies the Gracchan revolution, for example, branches out into generalizations about causes and effects of all revolutions. He may, however, be completely incompetent to speak with authority on any part of the subject other than the single fragment of evidence contained in the period which he has particularly studied. Now, the sociologist is not primarily and specifically a historian. He is dependent upon the historian. He has to learn how to take the facts that many historians authenticate and coin them into general truths about associated human life. For instance, the historian should furnish material for answering such questions as these about the period of which he treats: On what terms did the people live together? Under what constraints did they maintain those terms? For what ends did they endure the constraints? With what institutions did they act? In what way did they presently change their manner of living together? What part did individuals play, and what rôle was assumed by the society as a whole, and by the inanimate surroundings, in postponing or promoting these changes?

All such questions, when generalized into inquiries about universal tendency, have to be answered by first collecting instances. Here is the place of anthropology, ethnology, history. Then

these instances have to be put together in order to discovery, through comparison, of the common element of truth, *i. e.*, of the factors contained in all. This work is always attempted, or the results that presuppose such work are to a greater or less extent assumed, by every person who deals with any part of social science. This is an evidence, by the way, that it is all one subject artificially divided.¹ When we come to criticise the working division lines between scientific tasks, it appears that the historian, as such, has the duty of getting out some of the raw material. The sociologist is trying to show, among other things, how these different kinds of raw material may be organized into a fabric of general knowledge about the essentials in human society. In other words, sociology gets all of its real content through old and new search-sciences dealing with factors in the social whole. The special social sciences get their correlation from sociology; or better, the particular aspects of the common subject-matter dealt with respectively by the special sciences get their rendering in terms of the whole through sociology.²

After this unequivocal assertion that sociology is not concerned with a reality apart from the subject-matter of many familiar sciences, a restatement of the *raison d'être* of sociology is due. All human thought moves within the apparent bounds of *things* on the one hand and of *people* on the other. All the study that men devote to people converges properly toward generalization of specific, accidental, non-universal details into knowledge of what is universal and essential in human conditions and in human characteristics. The central question in the science of people is: What is the content of the human *per se*? This question cannot be answered except as we progress toward answer to the question: How does it fare with the human throughout its career of progressive self-realization? What subjective and objective forces are always concerned when the human puts itself forth in action, and according to what formulas do the reactions occur?

¹ Cf. above, pp. 639, 641, *et passim*.

² Cf. MACKENZIE, *Introduction to Social Philosophy*, chap. i, "The Scope of Social Philosophy."

These questions call for the conclusions toward which all inquiries into the facts about people properly converge. Sociology has undertaken to bring together the straggling ends of social research so that this remotely implied result will begin to appear in reality. The standpoint of sociology is thus an outlook that contemplates humanity in its wholeness. Sociology deliberately undertakes to establish the perspective in which to view all that may be learned about humanity. Sociology proposes to reconstruct the life of man, not by substitution of a new science to displace the older sciences of man, but by organizing these sciences into a system of reciprocally reinforcing reports of humanity as a whole.

Let us be more specific by taking the "trust" as an illustration. It is possible to analyze the trust from the standpoint of law, or from the standpoint of economics, or from the standpoint of politics, or from the standpoint of diplomacy, or from the standpoint of morals in the larger sense, or from the standpoint of industrial or technical evolution. The sociologist sees that each of these view-points affords an angle of vision from which to look upon the trust as it reveals certain combinations of human conditions and human quality. Now, the sociologist wants something more and better than these detached views. He wants to combine them into one view. He wants to have such a panorama of human conditions and qualities present to the mind that this incident, the trust, will fall into its relative place and proportion in the interplay of constant and general with temporary and special forces throughout the whole moving spectacle.

It may be asked whether all this is merely for purposes of thought, or has it a relation to further human action? Most certainly the latter. Just as the supplanting of Ptolemaic by Copernican astronomy affects the daily life of every sailor in the world, so the development of a sociology that is a report of what is objectively discoverable in the conditions and processes of human society will furnish the premises and the platform for a constantly improving art of living. As, in the case of navigation, the science has to be diluted through many simplifications

before it is available for the sailor, so with general sociology. Like any other science at its best, when it is at its highest power it will be comprehended by relatively few people. It will first influence the forms of thought among select specialists. These will influence the forms of thought among leaders who come into direct contact with larger numbers. The authorities of secondary orders will in turn distribute guiding conceptions throughout classes more and more removed from the technical viewpoint of the sociologist. Meanwhile experiment with the arts of life will progressively create a social practice between which and social theory there must be an increasing interchange of correction and corroboration.

Possibly it will appear in a few hundred years that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the relation of the sociologists to right thinking about the world of people was closely analogous with that of Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century to right thinking about the world of things. We have to establish a perspective that visualizes the whole human world in place of the unrelated parts that our abstract sciences have dissected out of the whole. Studying the human reality thus as a whole we have to learn how to measure more genuinely the parts out of which this reality is composed. This knowledge of general conditions will not guarantee infallibility about specific tasks, but, other things being equal, it will insure more intelligent grasp of the special conditions.

Virtually the same things that have been said so far in this chapter may be restated as follows:

"Held together in social relations men modify each other's nature."¹ This proposition presents the social fact in its most evident form. It involves the initial problem of sociology, viz., what are the details of the modifications which men's natures undergo through reciprocal influence?

The social fact may be described from another angle of view thus: The social fact is, first, the evolution of the individual through, second, the evolution of institutions, and the incidental reaction of all the individuals and institutions upon each other. That is, at any given moment individuals and institutions are

¹ GIDDINGS, *Principles of Sociology*, p. 377.

alike in full course of modification by the action of each upon the other. The individual of today is being modified by his contacts with other individuals, and by his contacts with today's institutions. Tomorrow's individuals will not be wholly the causes or the effects of tomorrow's institutions. Each is both cause and effect of the other.

With reference to this social *fact*, or social *process*, as we may name it according to the special aspect of it which we have in mind, certain general considerations may be urged, partly by way of repetition and partly in advance upon the position we have now reached.

Perhaps there is no phrase which is used with more vagueness of meaning than the phrase "the social point of view," or "the sociological point of view." Everybody who is intelligent today supposes himself to be first "scientific" and second "sociological" in his mental attitude. We need not now discuss what is involved in the "scientific" attitude, but under this title, the "social fact," we may note some of the marks of the sociological attitude toward the world. The use of this appears in the consideration just dwelt upon that the sociologists are trying to focalize within one field of vision all the activities that are going on among people, so that men and women who get the benefit of this outlook may see their own lives in their actual relation to all the lives around them. The sociological outlook is a position chosen for the deliberate purpose of placing each of us in his relations to all the rest, so that the meaning of each one's part in the complicated whole may appear.

Most people are more familiar with political economy than with sociology—or they think they are. Now political economy does an essential part of the work of mapping out relations between different human actions, viz., those actions that have for their primary and decisive aim the gaining of wealth. But the work of political economy, as compared with the demand which sociology discovers, may be likened to the work which an ordinary railroad map does in showing up the features of a country. When we look, for instance, at a map issued by either of the railroads that have terminals in Chicago, we are able to learn from

it all that it sets out to show about its own routes and connections. From that map alone, however, we should be likely to get little or no conception of the topography and climate, of the kinds of soil or varieties of products, of the density of population, of the political divisions, or even of the precise geographical relations of the country through which the road runs. In order to have the knowledge necessary for all departments of life in the locality, it is necessary for us to possess the information that would be represented by a series of geological, topographical, meteorological, political, and even transportation charts, picturing in turn different phases of natural and artificial conditions within the selfsame portion of territory covered by the map of a single railroad system.

In a somewhat analogous way political economy deals with the system of industrial lines of communication in a society — the industrial nerves and arteries of the body politic, so to speak. But the *life of society*, or the social *fact* or social *process*, is a vast system of physical, physiological, psychological, and personal action and reaction. The associational process is this social reality when we consider it in motion. In order to understand it we have to comprehend not merely the industrial element. That would be like seeing only one thread or figure that runs through the design of a tapestry. To know the social fact and the social process we have to be able to take in all these departments of action that make up the fact and the process; *i. e.*, the complete design of the fabric. We have to understand what these different kinds of action have to do with each other, and how each reacts upon the others.

When we speak of all this in cold blood, it seems to be a far-off and vague affair, with which we have the least possible concern. That, however, is the same mistake which we make if we think we have no concern with what the chemist calls "sodium chloride." When we find out that it is merely the salt that we want to use every day, we discover that it is our concern. In the same way we may be indifferent to the subject of "hydrous oxide," but if it is presented to us as drinking water we may see the wisdom of knowing something about it.

So the "social fact" or the "social process" is not an affair that exists outside of our circle of interests. Our whole life—from our eating and sleeping to our thinking and trading and teaching and playing and praying and dying—is a part of the social fact and of the social process. In us the fact and the process has its lodgment. In the fact and the process we live and move and have our being. Instead of not being concerned with them, they are the whole of our concern, so far as we are citizens of the world. We do not know our personal concerns until we see through and through the social fact and the social process.

Moreover, everything that we learn and try to apply as action gets its meaning in its connections with this social fact and social process. For instance, taking parts of school discipline as a sample of the larger whole: what is the good of geographical knowledge? If it stops with geographical facts alone, it is not worth having. Geography is worth studying because it helps to explain the lives of people, past and present, and the possibilities of people in the future. Or why is literature worth studying? Simply and solely because, in the first place, it shows us the inner explanations of the lives of people, past and present, and the internal resources upon which to build their future; then, in the second place, because it imparts to us some of those resources. In studying geography we are, or we ought to be, doing on a broader scale just what the immigrant does, when he scratches the ground where he halts his prairie schooner to see what sort of soil is under his feet. In studying literature we are doing somewhat more disinterestedly and calmly precisely what the lover does when he studies the moods and tastes of his mistress, so as to know how to make successful suit. He is after deep facts of human nature as betrayed in an individually interesting specimen. We are after similar facts of human nature in general.

In other words, we do not know anything until we know it in connection with the social fact and the social process. The things that we think we know are merely waste scraps of information until they find their setting in this reality, to which all knowledge belongs.

To recapitulate: The social fact is the incessant reaction between three chief factors: (1) nature; (2) individuals; (3) institutions, or modes of association between individuals. Each of these factors is composite, but at this point we may disregard that phase of the situation. The social process is the incessant evolution of persons through the evolution of institutions, which evolve completer persons, who evolve completer institutions, and so on beyond any limit that we can fix.

Sociology sets out to discover how all the details which anyone may learn about things or about people have to do with each other and are parts of each other in the social fact and the social process. These two phases of reality are, therefore, the setting in which sociology places all detailed knowledge in order to make it complete and true.

Instead of advancing at once from the position which we have repeatedly explained, we may add another alternative statement which will presently lead to a forward step in our argument. We have described sociology as the study of men considered as affecting and as affected by association. As was asserted in the beginning, this is no new study. Men have been engaged upon sections of it ever since they began to be reflective at all. Sociology is the emergence of consciousness that all these sections of study about men in association are parts of one study. This perception necessarily leads to criticism of the previous conduct of the study in its conventional divisions, and to theorems of reorganization of the study. Much of the work which has been done in the territory of the social sciences has been wasted, or worse, because the workers have either lost or never had the perception that their particular inquiry is merely a detail in a larger inquiry. That inclusive inquiry is: *What are the conditions, the contents, and the operations of human association?* This question will receive partial and approximate answers as the result of progressive application of reciprocal induction and deduction. We shall learn to know details in association by generalizing them into principles of association. On the other hand, we shall learn to know the details better by thinking them in terms of the general expression thus derived by induction,

while in turn we shall complete that induction by comparing it minutely with the details which it purports to generalize. In other words, we shall in turn interpret the part by the whole and the whole by the part. We might illustrate this proposition by tracing the history of the economic theory of value. We learn rather late that value is a product of association. We have developed our present ideas of value by a succession of conclusions, now from restricted economic premises, now from larger social premises, now from reduction of concrete occurrences to terms of the states of consciousness from which they proceed. At a given time we are using conclusions of more general and of more special orders, as reciprocal checks. Our theory of utility in general holds a sort of suspensive veto over conclusions about the laws of economic value. Our observations of the phenomena of value become in turn censors and reorganizers of our theories of utility. Our knowledge of association is not gained by following a straight series of logical links. The process is rather an alternation of judging our conception of wholes by closer analysis of parts, and then a testing of our analysis of parts by fitting them back into wholes. We might illustrate the same at length, if we could trace the steps in the changes that have taken place in our conceptions of political society. Judging from the accounts that fill the larger part of historical literature, most men have thought of political association as a combination of a few rulers and generals who were the meaning factors, with a vast human herd of no particular consequence in the association. Partly of course through an actual shifting of the balance of power, but principally through gradual ability to analyze the functions of political association, we have now reversed this immemorial judgment. We see now that the generals and rulers are the accidents in political association, while the masses are the essentials. The same thing is true of our conceptions of industrial association. We once imagined that industry was a divinely ordained means of creating tribute for a select few who did nothing, and of utilizing the labor power of the many whose reason for existence was the consuming capacity of their superiors. We now see that, if there are any

consumers who do not perform an industrial function, they either perform some other equivalent social function which is properly exchanged for the output of productive labor, or they are parasites whose existence has no justification in the social process. In a word, we have reached the perception, so simple that it seems too commonplace for mention, so sagacious that it has eluded the wise until very recently, that *the world of people is a community of individuals associating*. We have discovered that each of these terms—"community," "individual," "associating"—is a function of each of the other terms. We have learned that our conceptions of the content of these terms have been unreal: that is, we have not penetrated far into the essentials of their meaning. The psychologists are just beginning to restate the problems of the individual. The ethnologists, historians, political scientists and economists are trying to formulate the facts of community in different aspects, and the sociologists are just learning to state the problems of association in its most universal aspects as the largest generalization of human relationships.

The sociologist wants to discover a program by which he may begin to learn better than they have been learned before the things that are most characteristic of the world of people. He wants to get all that we can learn about the world of people into such correlation that the different parts of our knowledge will complement each other as a credible reproduction of the reality. He wants to know the regularities that recur wherever there are human associations. He also wants to know the kinds of variations that are actual and possible within these regularities. The sociologist finds that our concepts of the world of people are so conventional that they frequently mask the most essential relationships among people. For instance, in order to understand "industry" we may need to investigate much wider categories, viz., "interdependence" and "coöperation." In order to understand "government" we may need to see it as an accident of the more universal form "coördination" or "control;" etc., etc. Sociology therefore finds it necessary to start with the universal phenomenon association; to analyze it, in the first instance, without reference to the conventional social

sciences, in so far as that is possible, seeing that the bulk of what we know of human associations up to date is given us by the social sciences; and later to see how the conventional social sciences may be used to get more intimately acquainted with the content which the sociological formulation discloses.

All this may be indicated in still another way that to certain minds will be more vivid. The world of people, as it presents itself to the sociologist's preliminary survey, might be represented by a series of charts, which we may merely suggest in passing.

Using the largest surface available, describe a circle and outline within it all the continental areas of our globe (Chart A). Without drawing lines of political division, cover the inhabited areas with points representing individuals, with degrees of density corresponding with the population statistics of the different countries. Chart A would then stand for the "big buzzing confusion" that confronts the mind when it first encounters entirely uncriticised elements of the social fact, viz., variously dense multitudes of persons.¹

On the same scale describe a second circle (Chart B), in which the points symbolizing individuals begin to represent rudimentary perceptions of groupings. So far as the mechanical limitations permit, arrange the points denoting individuals in pairs, in constellations numbering from three to an arbitrary maximum—say ten—and scatter among these groups a number of detached points corresponding with the ratios of unmarried adults in the various areas. Chart B indicates the primary fact of family grouping, characterizing all human populations, but in no case precisely accounting for the whole population. The family may not be monogamous; the monogamous family may or may not increase beyond the original pair; and in no population of self-styled civilized people are all the adults members of family groups. In successive charts (C, D–N) on the same scale represent in turn associations that are dependent upon contiguity in space, and then those associations, commercial, scientific,

¹ "Der soziale Körper ist auf dem ersten Blick eine Vielheit von Einzelpersonen. . . . Wir fassen vorläufig das Individuum allein ins Auge, beziehungsweise die Bevölkerung als eine Vielheit und Mannigfaltigkeit von Individuen." (*Bau und Leben*, 2d ed., Vol. I, p. 35.)

religious, artistic, that overspread the same space, or in the most diverse fashions link individuals widely separated in space. Add occasionally in the series a chart showing lines of persons passing from each of these groups to each of the others, and thus maintaining inter-associational association. The whole sum of things that these diagrams would symbolize and vaguely suggest would be that association which is the total of activity in the world of people. Men have analyzed and described this association in whole or in parts in various conventional ways which sociology by no means wishes to supplant. Sociology finds, however, that, whatever may be the value of the different conventional ways of treating association, they do not suffice to bring out all the most essential relationships in association, or to exhibit those relationships in their actual functional dependence. We may treat sexual, racial, civic, ecclesiastical, or industrial association in turn without discovering the universal traits of association, or the most essential relationships of individuals to the association under either form. Hence the sociologist looks out over this seething complexity of men conditioning each other, and he says to himself: "These institutions that men maintain are products and incidents and accidents. The essentials are men themselves and their reactions with their physical and spiritual conditions. It may be that the reactions of men with their conditions are not best indicated in terms of race, and state, and church, and trade. It may be that these give too fragmentary and superficial reports of the essentials in men and associations. Therefore we will try to look through and beyond these conventionalities and to see the more significant realities that are behind them. We will try to look at men in more general categories, in order to see if we cannot in this way get more profoundly acquainted with them."

Accordingly the sociologist, analyzing for himself the contents of the circle in the diagrams, finds in the first place universal and manifold association. Getting his observation a little more precise, he first distinguishes between the men associating and the physical environment which forms the place and base of association. He then makes out certain characteristic facts which seem to be ever-present phases of association. These

facts are not terms in a series, but they are coexistent aspects of a constant reality. They have various relations to the whole associational unity, but they are equally and alike traits of that unity. In a later chapter we shall name a score of such traits. It by no means follows that these terms must be the categories under which sociology is to arrange its processes or results. They are rather some of the phases of reality which sociology proposes to investigate more closely. They are data which we derive from all our present means of thinking men as associating. These data present the sociological problems, viz.: In what forms do men associate? By force of what influences do men associate? What are the indicated ends of association? What are the available means for attaining these ends?

To repeat again: The sociologist looks out on the same world of people that other students of social sciences confront, but he looks with a differentiation of interest that focalizes his attention in a distinctive way. Other students want to know orders of facts and relations that to him are merely helps to perception, and then to comprehension of other facts and relations which inhere in the same social reality. The ethnologist, for instance, wants to know the facts of racial association. The sociologist says: "Perhaps we assume too much when we start with the presumption that the profoundest truths about racial association are to be discovered by studying racial associations alone. It may be that some of the peculiarities that we find in racial associations, and which we regard as attributes of race, are incidents of geographical, or political, or vocational, or cultural, or sexual, or merely personal association. It may be that some of the things which we attribute to race occur in mobs made up of an indiscriminate mixture of races. There are innumerable sorts of association in which there is action and reaction of individuals with very marked results. Consequently we need to investigate associations of all orders, if we are to be sure that things which we attribute to membership of one association are not equally or more characteristic of other associations. It is by this extension of view alone that we shall be able to trace the ultimate and fundamental relationships between individuals."

When we approach the study of men from this center of attention, we at once perceive in the world of people certain facts that are evidently of tremendous significance, which, however, have not yet attracted sufficient notice to be made the objects of severe scientific investigation. We have these facts given to us piecemeal by all the perceptive means and processes within the competency of ordinary experience and of the traditional social sciences. Our education makes it impossible for us to think of the world of people without thinking certain relations between people. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage from the sociological point of view; for, on the one hand, we must use these particular means of knowing people in association in order to get our data; but, on the other hand, we thereby get our data mixed with conventional construals of the data that to a greater or less extent prejudice the very questions which our center of interest brings into focus. This, however, is not peculiar to sociology. It takes place in every field of research, as knowledge advances from the less exact to the more exact.

The sociologist has taken up the clue that certain principles of regularity run through all human associations, and he wants to find out what these principles are. There are various possible ways of approaching the study, and we are now to exhibit the beginnings of one of them. In a word, the preliminary process that we shall outline is this. We survey all human associations that we can bring within our present field of view, and we set down features that seem to us to be common to human association in general. If there is any force in the precedents of all other scientific inquiry, the data that we thus select as the material to be studied have a very different look at the outset from the appearance which they will have after all available processes of investigation have been exhausted upon them. We do not select scientific data and forthwith pronounce them dogmatic conclusions, any more than we sit down at the beginning of a journey and declare ourselves at the end. The things that we see in human associations in general, with such insight as we are able to bring to bear on them now, are merely some of the data of sociology, and with these data sociology must begin to do its

peculiar work. How accurate are these preliminary generalizations? What similar generalizations must be added in order to schedule all the traits common to associations of men? What more intimate laws are contained in these data? Such questions set the problems for sociology.

To illustrate: We have long had statisticians of various sorts. They have tried to enumerate and classify various details of human association. Whether or not they have ever thought it worth while to formulate such an obvious truism as that association always involves a greater or less numerousness of individuals associating, the generalization is a datum of common and of scientific experience. The query arises: Do associations take on varying qualities with varying numerousness of the associated individuals? This query at once makes the axiom and truism of statistical science a datum that demands a whole system of inquiries which belong in wider reaches of sociological science.

Again, the ethnologist discovers that one human association is what it is because of other associations with which it is in contact. The church historian discovers that religious associations have been molded by political associations, and the political historians tell us that governmental associations in one state have been modified by contact with governmental associations in another state. Here is the fact of interdependence. The sociologist says: This is not an isolated phenomenon. Wherever there are human associations there are interdependences among the units, and between the association itself and other associations. This fact of interdependence must be understood, then, in its full significance, if we are to comprehend the conditions and laws of human association in their widest and deepest scope.

Again, demography and the history of science and philosophy show people in their spatial distribution and in their various degrees of remoteness from each other in ideas. The social psychologist generalizes this commonplace circumstance, and detects in it a clue to significant regularities of fact and process in association. He derives from all that he knows about

men in association the datum that discontinuity of some sort and some degree is universal among men in association. He sets this datum down in the list of things that must be known more completely in all its bearings upon the actions of men in contact with each other.

So we might go through a list which we may name "incidents" of association. They are data of sociology: deposits of much observation of the world of people from many points of view, but raw material with which we begin a study of men from the point of view of the sociologist, *i. e.*, when we want to correlate all that we can learn about the world of people into accounts of the laws of human association in general. In other words, there are larger truths in the laws of human association than emerge when we study in turn particular kinds of association. Those studies of particular kinds of association are incomplete, therefore, until they are merged into knowledge of these larger truths. The task of finding out precisely what these larger truths are and how they are related to each other furnishes the primary problems of sociology.

Our survey up to this point suffices to sharpen a simple perception which must presently afford much needed light on sociology. There has been endless perplexity among sociologists about the concept "society." It has been asserted, on the one hand, that if there is to be a science of society, there must first be a definition of society. By others it has been urged with equal confidence that the definition of society must of necessity be a product of a science of society, and cannot be had until the science is relatively complete. There is an element of truth in both these contentions, and both may be urged with somewhat similar force in connection with the reality "association."

The perception that should resolve the difficulty, however, is that the universal fact of association in the world of people is not to be taken as a closed concept, containing consequences to be drawn out by deduction as a system of sociology. The fact of association is rather an open world to be inductively described and explained. It is a fact of indefinitely varied forms, kinds, degrees, extents. Wherever there are two men there is association.

Between all the men in the known world there is association. There is the close, constant, firm association of the family group. There is the loose, transitory, precarious association of the world's sympathizers with Dreyfus or Aguinaldo or the Boers. There are associations spatial, vocational, purely spiritual. There are associations as persistent as the Celestial Empire and the Roman Catholic Church, and there are associations that form and dissolve in a day. In short, association can be defined in advance only in a formula which is essentially interrogative, viz., as *the functioning of related individuals*. This functioning has to be traced out, not merely at the first point of contact between individuals, but throughout the whole chain of relationships of which a particular contact closes the circuit.

Sociologists are accordingly less and less inclined to go through the motions of performing the impossible. Indication, not definition, of subject-matter belongs at the beginning of every inductive process. The task of sociology is primarily to make out the orders of human association, and so far as possible to determine the formulas of forces that operate in these several orders. Association is activity, not locality. Like states of consciousness, it has to be known in terms of process, not in dimensions of space. To make headway with the sociological task we must abandon pretentious *a priori* conceptions of all sorts, and patiently investigate concrete human associations until they reveal their mystery. Human associations overlap and interlace and clash and coalesce in bewildering variety of fashions. Sociology has at last become conscious of the problem of reducing this complexity to scientific statement of form and force and method.

Once more, recurring to our definition, "Sociology is the study of men considered as affecting and as affected by association," we may state the general problem of sociology in this among other variations, viz., *to make out the proper content of the concept social, or associational*. We will for convenience use chiefly the shorter synonym. We mean that the proximate task of sociology is so to analyze and then to synthesize the contents of associations, as such, that our abstract notion "association,"

with its attributive correlates "associational," "societary," or "social," shall receive a specific and systematized content. We want to answer the question: "What regularities recur in associations, from the lowest and simplest to the highest and most complex orders?" Only by so answering do we take the concept "social" from among merely formal categories, and fill it with a precise concrete meaning. We may vary our proposition by saying that the formal term "social" is a symbol for all that in associations which is of direct concern to sociology. Or, conversely, sociology is in quest of those things which pertain to associations as such, and the general term for those things is "the social." The initial task of sociology is to find and formulate the reality for which this symbol stands.

We may approach this task by elaborating this formal symbol. "The social" being our term for all that is of distinctively sociological interest in the whole area of associations, we have the task at the outset of making this formal concept as definite as possible. At the beginning of our inquiry, how much are we able to make the concept "social" mean?

The answer may be approached by reference to De Greef's thesis, that the distinguishing factor of the social is *contract*. In dissent from this position we have urged¹ that "it would be more correct, though still vague, to say that sociology deals especially with the phenomena of *contact*. The reactions which result from voluntary or involuntary contact of human beings with other human beings are the phenomena peculiarly 'social' as distinguished from the phenomena that belong properly to biology and psychology."

This claim may be expanded as follows: In the first place, we want to indicate, not the *essence* of the social, but the *location*, the *sphere*, the *extent* of the social. If we can agree where it is, we may then proceed to discover what it is.² In the first place, then, the social is the term next beyond the individual. Assuming, for the sake of analysis, that our optical illusion, "the individual," is an isolated and self-sufficient fact, there are many

¹ SMALL and VINCENT, *Introduction to the Study of Society*, pp. 60, 61.

²Of course the converse is true, with different ratios of content in the terms.

sorts of scientific problems that do not need to go beyond this fact to satisfy their particular terms. Whether the individual can ever be abstracted from his conditions and leave him himself is not a question that we need to discuss at this point. At all events, the individual known to our experience is not isolated. He is connected in various ways with one or more individuals. The different ways in which individuals are connected with each other are indicated by the inclusive term "contact." We will not now extend the meaning of this term to other contacts of persons than those with other persons. The reason is that, if we did, we should thereby take ourselves into a still more general field, within which the laws of the social are subordinate orders. Starting from the person, to measure him in all his dimensions and to represent him in all his phases, we find that each person is what he is by virtue of the existence of other persons, and by virtue of an alternating current of influence between each person and all the other persons previously or at the same time in existence. The last native of central Africa around whom we throw the dragnet of civilization, and whom we inoculate with a desire for whisky, adds an increment to the demand for our distillery products and affects the internal revenue of the United States, and so the life-conditions of every member of our population. This is what we mean by "contact." So long as that African tribe is unknown to the outside world, and the world to it, so far as the European world is concerned the tribe might as well not exist. The moment the tribe comes within touch of the rest of the world, the aggregate of the world's contacts is by so much enlarged. The social world is by so much extended. In other words, the realm of the social is the realm of circuits of reciprocal influence between individuals and the groups which individuals compose. The general term "contact" is proposed to stand for this realm, because it is a colorless word that may mark boundaries without prejudging contents. Wherever there is physical or spiritual contact between persons, there is inevitably a circuit of exchange of influence. The realm of the social is the realm constituted by such exchanges. It extends from the producing of the baby by the mother and the simultaneous

producing of the mother by the baby, to the producing of merchant and soldier by the world-powers, and the producing of the world-powers by merchant and soldier.

The "social," then, is the reciprocity and the reciprocity between the persons that live and move and have their being as centers of reaction in a world filled with like centers. Here is the material for the "organic concept." It gets its meaning as the antithesis of the atomistic individualistic philosophy. We are what we are by virtue of the fact that other men from the remote past and from the immediate present are continually depositing a part of themselves in us, and taking a part of us into their make-up in return.¹ This interaction of persons is the realm of the social. It is the next higher order of complexity above that set of reactions which we call the individual consciousness.

Tennyson gave us a picture of the "Two Voices" in the same personality—a very slight variation in detail upon Paul's psychological analysis of himself: "For the good that I would I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do."² Each man is in himself a society, not of *two*, but of innumerable voices, each striving for utterance, but composing themselves into some resultant activity that stands for the algebraic total of stimulus and response in each particular case.³ Two men become a society in which conditions that were possible in the consciousness of each without contact with another personal factor now have to compose themselves with reactions set in motion by contact of each with the other.

The social, then, is all the give-and-takeness there is, whether more or less, between the persons anywhere in contact. The

¹ I hope to be forgiven for a figure that harks back toward the notion of stuff, rather than process, as the reality behind associational phenomena. No one will feel the difficulty but the psychologists, and I trust them to accept my word that I do not mean to press the figure to that length.

² Rom. vii: 19.

³ After this was written and discussed in seminar, I happened upon Tarde's remark (*Les transformations du pouvoir*, p. 196): "Il y a deux sortes d'associations: premièrement, celle des divers esprits individuels unis en société; en second lieu, celle en chacun d'eux, des états de conscience qui s'y sont peu à peu agrégés et qui lui proviennent, pour la plupart, d'autres esprits. En chaque esprit individuel se répète plus ou moins cette agrégation plus ou moins systématique d'états de conscience qui constitue le type social."

realm of the social is the total of all the give-and-takings, considered severally or collectively, that occur among men. If we want to know the quality or the qualities of the social, we have to inspect these givings and takings in the largest possible number and variety of associations, and to note and classify their qualities. So far as we have gone, we find that the social is, qualitatively, not one thing, but many things. It is Tarde's imitation and it is Ward's misomimetism. It is Durkheim's "constraint" and it is Nietzsche's defiance of constraint. It is attraction and it is repulsion. It is mutual aid and it is mutual hindrance. It is consciousness of kind and it is consciousness of unkind. It is selection and it is rejection. It is adaptation and it is the tearing to pieces of adaptations. Furthermore, if we want to know the laws of the social, we have the task first of formulating these give-and-takings in all their meaning relations, and then of deriving the equations of their action, just as astronomers or chemists or physiologists have to derive the laws of reactions within their several fields.

To vary the foregoing propositions we may put the same thing in this form :

Human association is men accomplishing themselves. Here is a dialectic the two poles of which are perpetually reinforcing each other. The men are making the association, and the association is making the men. Parallel with this reciprocity in fact there must be a reciprocity in theory. The two poles of the dialectic must perpetually interpret each other. We cannot know the men except as we discover them in terms of their accomplishing ; and we cannot know the accomplishing except as we discover it in terms of the men. If we are satisfied with any less comprehensive statement of the case, we either make up a false process, or we fail to see that the whole thing is one process working itself out from centers of consciousness that are poles of other centers of consciousness. The psychologist and the sociologist are trying to tunnel the life-process from opposite sides ; the one from the individual, the other from the associational side ; but there is no way for either of them through the life-reality, unless it is a way in which they meet at last. Dropping the

clumsy figure we may say literally that the sociologist has the task of formulating man in his associational self-assertions. The psychologist has the task of formulating man in the mechanism of his self-assertions.¹

As was said above, our ability to look out over the field of human association, and to reproduce it in thought, however imperfectly, is due, in large part, to the conventional social sciences. The supposition now to be proposed, for the sake of varied statement of our main proposition, is accordingly strained as well as extravagant, but it will serve a certain purpose. Let us suppose that all human activities had occurred precisely as we observe them, with the exception of the activities which may be called collectively the social sciences. Suppose that men had associated precisely as we know them to have associated, with the one modification that they did no systematic thinking about association. We should have then industry, government, society, but we should have no political economy, political science, history, social philosophy. We should have at most records, chronicles of bare events, with no conventional classifications and interpretations of the events. Suppose that at this moment the process of social self-examination begins. Association becomes introspective. Certain men begin to feel scientific and philosophic curiosity about the human activities, some of which they see, and more of which they know by record. The

¹ The conceptions which these last paragraphs try to fix are not the property of any one individual, certainly not my own. So far as I can trace my share of them to definite sources, they are due largely to a sort of telepathic communication for seven years with my colleagues of the philosophical department of the University of Chicago, and to PROFESSOR J. MARK BALDWIN'S *Social and Ethical Interpretations*. My debt to the latter source is none the less clear, although I am unable to adopt all of Professor Baldwin's conclusions. For instance, I am disposed to dissent from his views on three out of the four cases of the "extra-social" which he specifies in this JOURNAL, Vol. IV, pp. 650 sq. As a sample of the former sort of stimulus a recent remark by Professor Dewey may be quoted: "The effort to apply psychology to social affairs means that the determination of ethical values lies, not in any set or class, however superior, but in the workings of the social whole; that the explanation is found in the complex interactions and interrelations which constitute this whole. To save personality in all we must serve all alike—state the achievements of all in terms of mechanism, that is, of the exercise of reciprocal influence. To affirm personality independent of mechanism is to restrict its full meaning to a few, and to make its expression in the few irregular and arbitrary." (*Psychological Review*, March, 1900, p. 123.)

main difference between what would follow and what now occurs in the field open to such reflection would be that no particular way of looking at the facts would be able to claim precedence over other ways. No "science" would be able to say: "This is my preserve, no one else has any right here." We should presently have the same social sciences that we have now, with the difference that no long familiarity with the forms of one of the sciences would give it a prestige that would obscure its relative subordination to all the other sciences. Among the ways of looking at the common subject-matter would be one which would enlist certain minds more intensively than the more specific forms of treatment. It would be the way which takes note, in the first place, of general characteristics manifested in all association, and which attempts to find the unity underlying the unspeakable diversity in the relations of these characteristics to each other, and in the relations of all specific and particular actions to their universals.

This, minus the fictitious historical assumption, marks the exact situation of the philosophical sociologists. They see that the impulse, quality, and tendency of the energy put forth in association is not necessarily indicated by the obvious and familiar groupings of persons and classifications of activities in the special social sciences. They see that the life-problem of every man is a question of his total function as a man. It cannot be summarily solved in terms of political or economic units. They see accordingly that the activities which associated men perform are consequences and accidents, on the one hand of the energies of the men associating, and, on the other, of their twofold environment. The sociologists, therefore, say that they are bound to know something over and above and beyond men in the different specific groups which first arrest reflective attention—their families, their trades, their classes, their unions, their nations, etc. The sociologists are bound to get acquainted with the common traits of men that produce these groups and in turn are affected by them. All this is part of the sociological purpose to penetrate beyond our present insight into knowledge of what is more and less essential, more and less fundamental, more and

less inevitable, more and less desirable, more and less modifiable and controllable in human conditions and actions.

This recapitulation brings us close to a perception which must be developed in later chapters. In a word, the universal fact of association, in all its varieties of scope and form, is an affair of individuals who are storage batteries of interests. All these phenomena of association are permutations of these interests that lodge in the individual. Whether we call these general facts "characteristics" or "circumstances" or "incidents" or "conditions" of association makes little difference, so long as we avoid using either word as a snap judgment about facts and relations which require further investigation. The main thing is that when we break away from the conventionalities of the older social sciences, and look out over human associations without using those conventionalities as spectacles, we see some general peculiarities of association that promise to reward further attention, especially by giving new meaning to familiar aspects of association. It is a fair presumption that further search with the aid of these clues will result in profounder knowledge of the specific social relationships than has been gained by study of them in the forms of the traditional sciences alone. It is the belief of the sociologists that it is possible so to generalize the facts which ethnology, history, economics, political science, and psychology analyze that we may presently have, not only a sociology that uses these facts, but a sociology that will in turn be a basis for these sciences in an improved form; a basis that will furnish means for discovering more facts and better ones in the peculiar territory of these special sciences.¹

This survey enforces the further conclusion which it has been hard for the sociologists to accept, to which comparatively few of them are even now reconciled, viz., that sociology cannot furnish any credible generalizations of laws until it has patiently studied conditions which confront us when we refuse to have our vision restricted by the categories of conventional social science. The very best thing that sociology can do in its present state is

¹ *Vide* "Methodology of the Social Problem," AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY, November, 1898, pp. 385 *sq.*

to make conditions and relationships conspicuous that are either invisible or obscure in the older forms of social science. We need to see aspects of association that we have either ignored or undervalued or never observed. We have been chasing moon-beam expectations of sociological systems before we have begun to criticise or even to collect our phenomena. In a few years, therefore, some of our most pretentious literature will be fit only for the museums of antiquities or the pulp mills. We have reached the obvious necessity of starting at the beginning and of refusing to let our dogmatizing zeal outrun our analytical discoveries. We have as terms in our problem : first, the physical environment ; second, the fundamental interests of individuals ; third, manifestations of these interests in the institutions that are the products of association ; fourth, forms of relationship that are discoverable in these institutions, and modes of operation that are manifested by the same. Now the sociological problem is to express all that occurs in human association in terms of the elements that enter into association. These are, first, the physical laws that *converge* in individuals, and, second, the spiritual laws that *emerge* in individuals.

We may conclude this chapter with a résumé of its already numerous repetitions. Sociology is one of the avenues of approach to knowledge of men as we actually find them, in distinction from men as we try to think them by abstraction for various special purposes. Thus, for example, if we want to know the laws of coexistence and sequence between states of consciousness in the individual mind, we have to consider men as standing each by himself. We disregard the relations of man to man. States of consciousness have existence, so far as we know, only within individual persons. We abstract one or more individuals from their living and moving with their fellows, and we try to discover what takes place within the consciousness of these individuals. Or, if we want to know the operations of the motive of self-interest in its relations to marketable goods, we have to abstract the economic man from the total man, and to trace the direction of his activities, and the laws of his activities, so far as the operation of self-interest can be measured : *i. e.*, we

have to develop "economic science." Or, if we want to learn the lessons of political experience, if we want to know how bodies of people joined together in states have fared in their attempts to live together as states, and to maintain themselves against other states, then we have to abstract from the whole mass of experience that is made up by the total history of all men, past and present, those portions of that experience which are primarily and evidently civic. We have to gather all the facts that are available about bodies politic. We have to set those facts in order, so that they will tell the utmost about the underlying principles which the facts manifest. We have to develop "political science."

But there is a more general and universal desideratum than either of these, or many more that might be scheduled. Men as men, not as specialists, want to understand the bearings of life as a whole. We want to know where and how to place ourselves in the confused tangle of activities that all men are carrying on together. We want to understand the conduct of life as a totality, so that we may make our individual lives, if possible, more intelligent factors in this whole, and so that we may move toward such adjustments of these incalculably various lives that the total of human conduct may become more intelligently unified. This desire to know the whole of human life, with a view to wiser conduct of life, has made men study in turn the various phases of life that are the particular objects of interest to the special social sciences. Sociology is not a rival of these sciences; it is a part of them, and an inevitable outcome and culmination of them. Expressed from the other point of view, each of these sciences is a pitifully incomplete part of the process of knowing its own subject-matter, unless it passes into the sociological synthesis and finds its completion there. Sociology advertises that, although we are just beginning to understand the intricacy of human life, it is possible to represent it in ways that will afford more connected views of the parts that compose it. These views are all the more trustworthy and valuable because they do not necessarily consist chiefly of novel details, but to a considerable extent frankly throw familiar details into new

perspectives, and then make requisitions for more details to fill up gaps of which we were unconscious in our previous knowledge.

Sociology, then, is not a proposed substitute for other divisions of social science. As we have argued above, it would be a step toward clearness if we should agree to use the term "sociology" as a generic name for all the social sciences considered, not as a series or hierarchy, but as an interdependent process of knowing the social reality as a whole: the system of divided labor upon the common subject-matter which has to be viewed in various aspects. If that agreement were reached, it would of course be desirable to fix upon a name for that portion of sociology which we are explaining in accordance with the description "study of man considered as affecting and as affected by association." Professor Sumner, of Yale, has introduced the term "societology," and he apparently applies it to very nearly the same aspect of the subject-matter to which these papers apply the term "sociology" in the secondary or more special sense of our formula. We repeat that our use of the term in this way is deliberately metaphorical. Usage, not academic nor individual preference, will of course gradually enforce a self-consistent code of terms with constant values.¹

Not to deal further with this important but non-essential matter of names, our point of departure is this: Human life, as it appears to us objectively, is *the involved activity of individuals associating*. Knowledge of human life accordingly presupposes a conspectus of human associations, and intimate perception of the ways in which the persons and the associations affect each other. This knowledge cannot be reached by any single science. Sociology is, in the first place, a sort of range-finder. The figure will not bear very close inspection, but, to be literal, sociology has to chart the field of human association, to correlate extant knowledge of various associations, and to show the relations

¹ Major Powell has made the following suggestion: He distinguishes sociology as "the science of institutions," and he adds: "I use the term sociology to distinguish one of five coördinated sciences: esthetology, technology, sociology, philology, and sophiology, and I call all of these sciences *demonomy*. I classify the sciences of sociology as *statistics, economics, civics, historicis, and ethics*." (*American Anthropologist*, July, 1899, p. 476.)

of problems that look to more knowledge about association. Within the field thus described the work of all the social sciences falls.

For instance, general sociology names, among other associations, that of superior races with inferior races. Extant knowledge, such as it is, furnishes a few more or less credible generalizations about the laws of interrelation in case of such association. But suppose we wish to take up, as a serious scientific problem, the status of the colored race in the United States. Our general sociology will furnish the landmarks. It will help us place that particular association among all the other associations that compose the life of the world, and of our particular country at this moment. But we want to know, for example, wherein the assumed inferiority and superiority of the two races consists. Is it physiological? Is it psychical? Is it both? Is it accidental or essential? What is the prospect that the distinguishing differences can be made to disappear? What is likely to occur as this association of two unlike races continues? These questions propose problems that no abstract reasoning can solve. They take us into the realm of one social science and one physical science after another. Physiology must give its testimony. Ethnological investigation is needed. History must yield new information. Psychology must add discoveries. Political science must contribute its evidence. Political economy must furnish elements of the solution. All these and many more phases of the facts in question must then at last be organized into a representation of the whole situation.

Or, suppose we are studying the past, present, and future of the association which we see at this moment between a proletariat and a propertied class in this country. To what extent is it actual? Whence comes it? Whither tends it? What may we do about it? Here as before we have a group of real problems which are not the preserve of any conventional science. It involves history, statistics, demography, and, indeed, every other science that deals with real men. All our conclusions, whether scientific or popular, about such real conditions, imply as their logical antecedents the methods of discovery appropriate to these

particular departments of research. So in general of any case of actual association between men which we want either to understand or to control or to modify. Each is a fact within the great fact of human association at large. This fact of human association, made up of innumerable constituent associations, has its historical and its contemporary phases, all of which involve active influences in force at each given moment in any specific association. General sociology has, then, first of all, the task of plotting this whole actual system of human associations, and of deriving all the knowledge available about principles that are of general validity within and between associations. Thus the work of general sociology is related to the actual conduct of reflective life in society somewhat as geometry is to applied mechanics, or as general logic is to a particular argument. In other words, general sociology is merely formal and empty and speculative if it is considered as isolated from the rest of social science and self-sufficient. Having an actual content, it is merely one of the stages through which perceptive material about human life must pass in getting converted into knowledge of life in its wholeness.

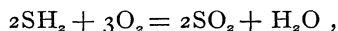
It is to be said, further, and with all possible emphasis, that the results which sociology will reach for a long time to come must be chiefly qualitative, not quantitative. This proposition may be illustrated by use of very familiar material. For instance, every observer of American politics knows that we have to reckon with a certain hereditary antipathy to England. We know that this feeling is of two distinct types, viz., that which dates from our colonial times, and that which began to come over from Ireland at the middle of the nineteenth century. We must add to these distinct types of anti-British feeling the less definite and less energetic jealousy of Great Britain brought to us by immigrants from other European countries. On the other hand, we know that there are certain affinities between ourselves and the British. Now, it is a matter of nice balancing in "practical politics" to map out party programs so that these feelings will be discounted. No one can in advance take the precise measure of the pro- or anti-British sentiment. Politicians have to know

these sentiments qualitatively, and to be good judges of the stimuli that tend to rouse them. So of the sectarian sentiments. Everybody knows that there are materials for very determined conflict in most of the cities of the United States, if the inhabitants did not instinctively take account of the fact that they are not homogeneous theologically, or even religiously. We are in the main—not to mention minor differences—Jews and Catholics and Protestants and eclectics. Every candidate for public office, and every bidder for public approval of any sort, in our cities, or in the country at large, has to adjust his conduct to approximate qualitative knowledge of these religious differences. Not only that, but every citizen has to pay more or less conscious respect to the existence of these differences. The more general and public our relations are, the more do we need to make our qualitative knowledge of these factors in our environment precise and available.

The same is true of the centralizing and localizing sentiment in our political motives in the United States; of our sectional consciousness; of our attitude toward the possibilities suggested by the terms "expansion" and "anti-expansion;" of our individualistic and collectivistic tendencies in formulating industrial ideals. We cannot be intelligent actors in public life in any station unless we know the existence and the rôle of these and similar moral forces in our society. We must know them, not merely in these relatively complex and familiar forms, but in their relatively simple and elusive psychological elements. It is impossible for us to know these forces as the mechanical engineer knows the amount of power set free by use of a given quantity of fuel, or by the fall of a given volume of water from a given height. What we can know at best is the character and tendency of these forces, and certain facts of varying degrees of accuracy about their sources and their reciprocal ratios.

Now sociology, in its most general form, as well as in most of its more special forms of history, ethnology, economics, etc., is dealing with phases of human life which, at present at least, are knowable only qualitatively, and to a certain extent relatively. To know human relations in this way is by no means a

contemptible achievement. It is all the more respectable if we are perfectly clear in our own minds about the difference between such knowledge and knowledge that is definitely quantitative. Sociology is an attempt to know the factors that are always at work in every group of human beings, from the primitive pair, or the horde, to the modern religious congregation, or trade union, or club, or international alliance. Such factors are to be traced to the rudimentary conditions explained to us by physiology and psychology, *e. g.*, irritability and suggestibility. They appear in more complex forms as habit, imitation, invention. They are organized into sympathy and antipathy. They act with accumulations of physical and mental tradition. They become conflict, coöperation, individualization, and socialization. They arrive at last at the varieties of developed forms of association that are manifested by the most evolved societies. It is desirable and possible to know these factors of individual and social life qualitatively, in such a way that it will be feasible to rationalize life more intelligently. In order that we may not yield to the temptation to become dogmatic upon an insufficient basis, we should be advised at the outset, however, of the limitations of this knowledge. The amount of knowledge within the reach of today's sociology (in the large and inclusive sense) simply puts us in a position to judge of social reactions a little more sanely than people can who do not have the use of an equal amount of knowledge. We cannot yet in a single instance formulate in advance the influences that will produce a proposed social reaction in such a way that the formula can compare in precision and certainty with typical formulas in chemistry. Instead of being able to say, for example,



the best that we can say is something like this: Representing the fundamental human desires by *A, B, C, D, E, F*, and representing those desires as they appear in a given social situation by undetermined coefficients and exponents, we have at the most something like the following:

$$\text{The given situation} = ?A^? ?B^? ?C^? ?D^? ?E^? ?F^?.$$

Or we may reverse the formula for purposes of prediction, and it will amount to this: Given the terms,

$$?A' ?B' ?C' ?D' ?E' ?F',$$

and the product will be a certain social condition to be symbolized very roughly by the expression:

$$(A^a B^r C^v D^w E^x F^y)N. a. b.$$

On the other hand, it must be urged that inability to reach accuracy about the forces concerned in social reactions does not bar the way to studies which presuppose results at this point. We may take up further problems of qualitative measurement, while elementary problems, both of description and of measurement, are still in process of solution. For instance, suppose we reach the decision, hinted at above, that in all human associations we are dealing with fundamental human *interests*, which manifest themselves in desires, that in turn operate in accordance with variations of irritability, suggestibility, habit, imitation, invention, sympathy, and antipathy. There are a thousand problems about the actual quality of these forces, and about their relations to each other. Yet we may proceed to study the facts of modern *democracy*, for example, as they present themselves to our observation, and as they emerge in course of our experiments with control. We may study them in all their physical, industrial, æsthetic, scientific, moral, legal, and political phases, without waiting for the more intimate problems to be solved. Indeed, these antipodes of sociological study will both balance and stimulate each other. Each set of problems will be the more intelligently treated because of consciousness that neither set of problems will be settled until the results can be correlated with the results of the other set. We are estopped from dogmatic snap judgments about the social conditions in which we pursue our immediate daily interests, by consideration of the more precise elements of human activity and motive that are under investigation by students of another type.

Furthermore, we are not debarred from immediate social ambition, nor from practical endeavor to make society better, by the fact that sociological theories are only in the making. Physicians practiced fumigation of infected places, and with a certain

degree of success, long before they had an approximate explanation of the propagation of disease. We need not be less efficient for being intelligent about our limitations. There is no knowledge of social relations that can furnish adequate major premises for wholesale dogmas about social programs. There is insight into the facts of human association sufficient to show the way toward more insight, and toward more intelligent action. It is honest, and therefore socially the best policy, to represent sociology as it is, not as its more selfish exponents would like to have their public imagine that it is.

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[*To be continued.*]